

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 EB-11 HEW-08 AID-20 IGA-02 AGR-20

OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

DRC-01 /102 W

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R 251022Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7252

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FOR ACTING ASST. SECRETARY HUMMEL AND ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR
NOOTER FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID BM

SUBJECT: TERMINATION OF UNICEF TITLE II PROGRAM

REF: STATE 189109

1. I AM PROFOUNDLY DISAPPOINTED AT THE ABRUPT TERMINATION, NOTWITHSTANDING EXISTING COMMITMENTS FOR FY 74, OF OUR MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH FEEDING PROGRAM. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD REVIEW THIS ACTION AND SEEK MEANS OF CONTINUING LIMITED TITLE II PROGRAM FOR BURMA AT LEAST THROUGH FY 74, IN ORDER TO ALLOW SOME TIME, HOWEVER SHORT, FOR GUB TO SEEK OTHER SOURCES OF HELP.

2. THE CURRENT FOOD-SUPPLY SITUATION IS GRAVE. IT SHOULD BE RECALLED THAT BURMA HAS BEEN AND STILL IS FACING MOST SERIOUS FOOD SHORTAGES SINCE WORLD WAR II, WITH SHARP INCREASE IN CASES OF SERIOUS MALNUTRITION. CONTINUATION OF LIMITED PROGRAM THROUGH FY 74, AND TERMINATION IN FY 75 (ASSUMING CURRENT TIGHT SUPPLY SITUATION CONTINUES TO PREVAIL), WOULD AT LEAST RELIEVE US FROM REPUDIATING EXISTING COMMITMENTS, AND WOULD TIDE NEEDY RECIPIENTS OVER UNTIL DOMESTIC FOOD SITUATION IMPROVES.

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EM ALTHOUGH I FULLY RECOGNIZE CRITICAL NATURE OF FOOD SITUATION IN BANGLADESH AND SAHELIAN AFRICA, I DO NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD PUT BURMA, WITH LOWEST PER-CAPITA INCOME IN ASIA, IN SAME CATEGORY AS SUCH FAR LESS NEEDY COUNTRIES AS ISRAEL, SINGAPORE, AND MALAYSIA.

4. ASIDE FROM HUMANITARIAN IMPLICATIONS OF ABRUPTLY CUTTING OFF FOOD AID IN COUNTRY AS POOR AS BURMA, THIS DECISION HAS WIDER-RANGING POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. I HAVE PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED MY CONCERN AT OUR INABILITY TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT MEETING MODERATE BURMESE REQUESTS FOR AID ON SEMI-CONCESSIONAL TERMS, AND OUR APPARENT LACK OF INTEREST IN BURMA'S NEEDS, IN CONTRAST TO OUR FREQUENT PRESSURE FOR BURMESE ACTION TO HELP US OUT ON PROBLEMS SUCH AS NARCOTICS. GRANTED THIS LATTER IS, AS GUB NOW RECOGNIZES, A PROBLEM OF MUTUAL INTEREST, IT IS BOTH UNTIMELY AND UNFORTUNATE THAT USG SHOULD FOLLOW RECENT STRIKING SUCCESSES OF BURMESE CONTROL EFFORTS BY CUTTING OFF ONE OF OUR ONLY REMAINING AID PROGRAMS IN BURMA.
MARTIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973RANGOO02260
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730912/aaaaaimw.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 189109
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Nov-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <13-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TERMINATION OF UNICEF TITLE II PROGRAM
TAGS: EAID, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005